

Pan Flu Summit February 24, 2006
Remarks for Secretary S. Anthony Cann

[Welcome]

- GOOD MORNING!
- I'M TONY MCCANN, SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE.
- IT IS GREAT TO SEE SO MANY OF YOU HERE TODAY.
- THANK YOU FOR MAKING TIME TO JOIN US!
- BEFORE WE START ON TODAY'S AGENDA, I WANT TO REMIND EVERYONE TO PLEASE REMEMBER TO SILENCE YOUR CELL PHONES AND PAGERS.
- I AM ESPECIALLY PLEASED TO WELCOME MICHAEL LEAVITT, SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND GOVERNOR BOB EHRLICH.
- AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, LAST NOVEMBER PRESIDENT BUSH ASKED SECRETARY LEAVITT TO CONVENE A PANDEMIC INFLUENZA SUMMIT IN EACH OF THE STATES.
- TODAY IT IS OUR TURN AND I KNOW SECRETARY LEAVITT HAS SOME IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO SHARE WITH US.

- IF YOU HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO GLANCE AT THE AGENDA, YOU ALREADY KNOW THIS SUMMIT WILL BE A VERY BUSY ONE SO IT IS TIME TO GET TO WORK.
- IT IS MY DISTINCT PLEASURE TO INTRODUCE MY BOSS, GOVERNOR BOB EHRLICH.
- GOVERNOR EHRLICH KNOWS THE IMPACT PANDEMIC FLU COULD HAVE ON OUR STATE, AND HE HAS BEEN QUITE ACTIVE WITH THE ISSUE.
- IN CABINET MEETINGS, THE GOVERNOR STRESSES HOW CRITICAL IT IS FOR ALL OF MARYLAND'S AGENCIES TO WORK TOGETHER IN PAN FLU PLANNING.
- HE HAS OFFERED STRONG SUPPORT FOR TWO TABLETOP EXERCISES HELD TO TEST OUR PANDEMIC PLAN.
- LAST FALL, HE ASKED US TO REACH OUT WITH INFORMATION ABOUT FLU TO ALL OF THE COMMUNITIES IN OUR STATE.
- HE ASKED US TO CREATE A WEB SITE THAT WOULD SERVE AS A 'ONE-STOP SHOP.'
- HE WANTED IT TO DETAIL THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SEASONAL FLU AND A PANDEMIC FLU, AND WHAT STEPS PEOPLE COULD TAKE TO STAY HEALTHY.
- THIS WAS A PROJECT THAT ENCOMPASSED MUCH MORE THAN THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

- WE HAD A GREAT DEAL OF HELP FROM OUR SISTER AGENCIES ACROSS THE STATE.
- THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS ENABLED US TO LAUNCH THE SITE IN MID-NOVEMBER!
- THESE SEVERAL EXAMPLES ARE AMONG MANY THAT ILLUSTRATE THE GOVERNOR'S COMMITMENT TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF EVERY PERSON WHO LIVES IN OUR GREAT STATE.
- PLEASE JOIN WITH ME IN WELCOMING GOVERNOR BOB EHRLICH.

-- end --

[Introduce Secretary Leavitt]

- OUR NEXT PRESENTER IS SECRETARY LEAVITT.
- MIKE LEAVITT BRINGS A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF ON-THE-GROUND EXPERIENCE TO THE JOB OF SECRETARY OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.
- HE WAS AN EXECUTIVE IN THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY BEFORE BECOMING GOVERNOR OF UTAH.
- HE WAS ELECTED TO THAT POST THREE TIMES BEFORE MOVING TO WASHINGTON TO SERVE AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY.
- SLIGHTLY MORE THAN A YEAR AGO, HE TOOK ON THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR LEADING HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, THE LARGEST CIVILIAN DEPARTMENT IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT - IT HAS 66,000 EMPLOYEES AND 25 PERCENT OF THE FEDERAL BUDGET.
- AS SECRETARY OF H-H-S, HE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HEALTH OF ALL AMERICANS -- AND FOR PROVIDING ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO THOSE IN NEED.
- SHOULD A PANDEMIC OCCUR, IT IS H-H-S THAT THE NATION WILL TURN TO FOR LEADERSHIP.

- SEC. LEAVITT IS WIDELY RECOGNIZED AS A HEALTH CARE INNOVATOR AND WELFARE REFORMER, AND HIS RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT IN UTAH BEARS THIS OUT.
- IN 1994, THE UTAH LEGISLATURE PASSED GOV. LEAVITT'S "HEALTHPRINT," A COMPREHENSIVE, INCREMENTAL APPROACH TO HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT IN THE STATE.
- A DECADE LATER, UTAH HAS MORE THAN 400,000 ADDITIONAL PEOPLE WITH HEALTH INSURANCE -- MARKED INCREASES IN THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WITH HEALTH CARE COVERAGE -- DRAMATICALLY IMPROVED IMMUNIZATION RATES -- AND PER CAPITA COST OF HEALTHCARE 25 PERCENT BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.
- MR. SECRETARY, IT IS A PLEASURE TO HAVE YOU WITH US TODAY -- WELCOME TO MARYLAND!

-- end --

[Intro – signing of planning document]

- AS I SAID EARLIER, TODAY IS A VERY BUSY DAY AND THERE IS A LOT OF WORK TO DO.
- NEXT UP IS THE SIGNING OF A SPECIAL DOCUMENT BETWEEN THE STATE AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.
- THIS IS A PLANNING AGREEMENT THAT REFLECTS MARYLAND'S COMMITMENT TO PAN FLU PREPARATION.
- IT RECOGNIZES THAT THIS TYPE OF PREPARATION REQUIRES COORDINATED ACTION AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT --
- FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL –
- AND ALL SECTORS OF SOCIETY.
- THE AGREEMENT MEANS THAT HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES WILL PROVIDE TECHNICAL GUIDANCE AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO MARYLAND.
- WE WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ADVANCING PAN FLU PLANNING IN OUR STATE.
- A PART OF THAT INVOLVES AN EXERCISE THAT WILL PUT OUR PREPAREDNESS PLAN TO A TEST.
- WE WILL ALSO PARTICIPATE IN A NATIONAL EXERCISE.

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[Introduce Dr. Gourdine]

- NOW THAT SECRETARY LEAVITT AND GOVERNOR EHRLICH HAVE EXCHANGED AUTOGRAPHS, PLEASE JOIN WITH ME TO THANK THEM FOR JOINING US TODAY AND SHARING THEIR THOUGHTS ON THIS IMPORTANT TOPIC.
- NOW, I AM GOING TO TURN THE PROGRAM OVER TO DR. MICHELLE GOURDINE.
- PANDEMIC INFLUENZA IS VERY MUCH A PART OF HER PORTFOLIO AT DHMH.
- DR. GOURDINE HAS BEEN WITH DEPARTMENT SINCE FEBRUARY 2005 – IN FACT, SHE RECENTLY HAD FIRST-YEAR ANNIVERSARY WITH DHMH.
- SHE IS OUR DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES --
- THIS PORTION OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT ENCOMPASSES SEVEN ADMINISTRATIONS, ALONG WITH:
- THE OFFICE OF CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER,
- THE ANATOMY BOARD,
- 24 LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS,
- TWO CHRONIC CARE FACILITIES,

- FOUR FACILITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED,
- AND 10 MENTAL HEALTH HOSPITALS.
- DR. GOURDINE SUPERVISES A STAFF OF 6,000 AND A TOTAL BUDGET OF MORE THAN \$1.2 BILLION.
- SHE PREVIOUSLY SERVED AS HEALTH OFFICE IN BALTIMORE COUNTY FOR 10 YEARS.
- WHILE THERE, SHE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FULL RANGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES IN AN URBAN-SUBURBAN COUNTY WITH A POPULATION OF 770,000.
- ALL OF US AT DHMH ARE VERY PLEASED SHE IS NOW OVERSEEING SERVICES AT THE STATE LEVEL.

-- end --

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